

Appl. No. 10/617,687
Amendment dated March 13, 2007
Reply to Office Action of December 13, 2006

H-1103

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

Claims 7-9 and 11-18 remain pending in this application. Claims 1-6 and 10 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. No new claims have been added.

Priority

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's acknowledgment of the claim for priority and safe receipt of the priority document.

Claim Objections

Claim 18 has been amended as required by the Examiner.

35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 9 and 15 have been rewritten in independent form and have been amended to overcome the outstanding rejection under this section.

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35 U.S.C. §§102 and 103

Claim 6 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Sugawara (U.S. Patent No. 5,339,452). Claim 10 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Jong (GB 2-316-558). Claims 1 and 3-5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Jong. Claim 2 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Jong, as applied to claim 1, and further in view of Hughes et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,754,479).

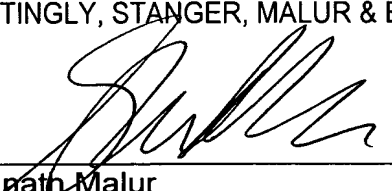
The rejection of these claims has been rendered moot by the cancellation of these claims without prejudice or disclaimer in order to expedite the issuance of subject matter indicated as being allowable.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

MATTINGLY, STANGER, MALUR & BRUNDIDGE, P.C.

By 
Shrinath Malur
Reg. No. 34,663
(703) 684-1120